

Examples of negative thoughts when you are feeling down:

- “Things are never going to change”
- “I am not good enough”
- “I shouldn’t have done that”
- “No one cares about me”
- “What’s the point?”

When people feel down, they tend to do fewer activities and hobbies:

They often spend more time in bed, in front of the television, or sometimes busying themselves on the computer. They tend to seek out more situations where they can be alone.

These withdrawal behaviours can maintain feelings of low mood especially when they occur day after day, week after week. They can also cause loneliness.

If these symptoms of anxiety, worry, and low mood have started to interfere with your happiness and ability to live your life productively, you might like to discuss these concerns with your GP.



There are many good options for getting help. Psychological therapies and medications can be helpful. Talk to your GP for more information, or contact these organisations:

Centre for Emotional Health Clinic, Macquarie University

Telephone: 02 9850 8711

Email: ehc.admin@mq.edu.au

Beyond Blue

Telephone: 1300 22 4636

Website: www.beyondblue.org.au

SANE Australia

Telephone: 1800 18 7263



Anxiety, Worry, and Low Mood in Older Adults

Brochure created by Dr Jessamine Chen, Professor Viviana Wuthrich, Dr Carly Johnco, and Dr Denise Meuldijk for Beyond Blue and is freely distributable



What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is a normal emotion and everyone experiences it some of the time. However, when it goes on, it can start to stop you from doing things or going to places. You might experience the following symptoms when you are feeling anxious:

- Feeling jittery or on-edge
- Dry mouth
- Racing thoughts
- Difficulty concentrating
- Tightness in chest or throat
- Difficulty sleeping
- Shakiness
- Nausea
- Racing heart or pulse
- Dizziness or light headedness
- Difficulty breathing
- Muscle tension



You might feel anxious in these situations:

- Supermarkets
- Crowded places
- New and unfamiliar places
- Talking in a group
- Thinking about the future/past
- Worrying about your health
- Riding on buses or planes
- Worrying about finances
- Worrying about becoming dependant
- Going away from the house for long periods of time

Examples of Worries:

- *What if my grandchildren don't get a good education?*
- *What if I get dementia?*
- *What if the blood test results are bad?*
- *What if people think I am stupid?*
- *What if I make the wrong decision?*
- *Everyone will laugh at me and think I am an idiot!*
- *Something bad is going happen.*
- *I made a terrible mistake, and have ruined everything!*

What is Low Mood?

One feature of low mood is having feelings of sadness, low mood, emptiness, numbness or flatness. The other feature is a loss of interest in doing things you used to enjoy doing. You might experience:

- Feeling sad or empty
- Feeling very slowed down
- Loss of interest in things you used to enjoy
- Feeling agitated or irritable
- Low motivation
- Having thoughts about suicide or self-harm
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling hopeless about the future
- Difficulty sleeping
- Eating more or less than usual
- Gaining or losing weight
- Withdrawing from other people
- Feeling guilty about past events
- Excessive fatigue